Annual Report
2012-2013
The Student Government Association is proud to have served the students of the University of West Florida during the 2012-2013 academic year. Throughout the year SGA remained committed to its vision and its goals. SGA members worked as advocates on behalf of their fellow Argos to better student life at the University of West Florida.

SGA reached new heights as members enjoyed the new efficiencies of the representative Senate structure. SGA members accomplished their goal of spending less time on internal day-to-day business and more time on the most important function of the organization...to serve the student body of UWF.

Our number one goal was visibility, we achieved this by increasing two way communications with students. Our vision included SGA being the first place students went with their suggestions, ideas, and concerns. Accountability, another important goal, was linked to this initiative. SGA empowered students and valued their ideas. SGA representatives replied to all student comments and followed up on unanswered questions heard at events such as town halls.

Our second major goal was to increase pride, not only pride in the important opportunities SGA has to impact its constituents and the campus, but more importantly, overall pride in the University of West Florida. As UWF moves from a commuter university to a more traditional campus, we must work diligently to spread the word of our current traditions and to create new ones that will endure for years to come. SGA completed our “Blue and Green Tradition Book” which includes the top 50 traditions at UWF. At orientation, there was an emphasis on school spirit and on the sentiment that you are an “Argo For Life” beginning freshman year. Great strides were made to advance Argo pride.

Sincerely,
Cora Merritt, SGA President 2012-2013
Chris Hill, SGA President 2013-2014

President:
Cora Merritt
Vice President:
Keldrick Averhart
Chief of Staff:
Chelsea Kendrick
Senate President:
Amy Bueno
Treasurer:
Celena Bedosky
Student Outreach Chair:
Matt Dannheisser
University Outreach Chair:
Patrick Stepina
Budget & Allocations Chair:
Christopher Thrasher
Rules & Statutes Chair:
Ashton Hartley
Director of Student Life:
Chris Hill
Director of Communications:
Tyler Martin
Director of Govermental Affairs:
Brooke Mills
Freshmen Committee Chair:
Kylan Osley
Assistant Dean of Students:
Robin Zimmern
Office Administrator:
Lauren Fagler/ Katherine Clark
Graduate Assistants:
Liz Madaris & Bhavna Shetty
The SGA Executive Board participated in seven leadership workshops and an overnight retreat as part of the Summer Leadership Series 2012. Students met with university administration to discuss plans for the upcoming year.

Topics discussed focused on professional development and university knowledge and included sessions on effective communication, crisis management, and budgeting. Each workshop was designed to align with student learning outcomes developed to track student’s ability to articulate connections between professional development topics and their work in SGA. The data was used to inform an enhanced curriculum for the 2013 Summer Leadership Series.

**Special Initiatives**

• Organized UWF Pep Rally and annual T-shirt Swap with Athletics and President’s Office

• Along with Athletics and the Student Alumni Association, co-sponsored a tailgate before the men’s soccer game in November

• During the national election season, partnered with Voyages and the Black Employee Association to host a voter registration drive

• Planned the UWF Leadership Gauntlet, a collaborative effort with Housing, UCSA, and Recreation

• Together with Student Alumni Association, SGA worked to create the “We Discount for Argos” flyers and website to show students where discounts are available throughout the community

• Collaborated with the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities for Academic Integrity Week

• Collaborated with the Black Employee Association to host first-ever Diversity Week on campus

**Green Fee:**

SGA put out the inaugural call to allow faculty, staff and students to submit green fee proposals. An ad hoc committee of SEAS students and SGA students met to review and narrow down proposals. Selected projects included: filtered water fountain stations around campus, LED lighting, and a charging port for electric cars.

**SGA Aim Higher Initiative:**

SGA students worked with the Florida Student Association (FSA) to develop an initiative to spread the word on the importance of state legislators investing in higher education in Florida. SGA partnered with Marketing Communications, Campus Administrators and other students to promote the importance of higher education. Additional information about the Aim Higher initiative can be found at http://aimhigherfl.com.

**Traditions Book:**

This year SGA worked with the Student Alumni Association to create the UWF Blue/Green Traditions Book. This book was developed to promote Argo Pride by detailing the traditions on campus. Students are challenged to complete at least 30 activities, with an incentive to receive a medal for them to wear at graduation.

**Awards**

**SGA Wall of Fame Recipient:**
Cora Merritt, Amy Bueno & Kelrick Averhart

**SGA Senator of the Year:**
Vajeeha Qureshi

**SGA Cabinet Member of the Year:**
Nora Trotman

**SGA Freshman Committee Member of the Year:**
Allyse Rolle-Polk & Elizabeth Wright

**Student Affairs Outstanding Graduate Assistant:**
Liz Madaris

**UWF Hal Crosby Award:**
Cora Merritt

**UWF Departmental Student Organization of the Year:**
Student Government Association
Chair: Patrick Stepina  
Committee Members: Brittany Denny, Kesha Royster, Daniel McBurney, Vajeea Qureshi & Denisha Merriweather

The University Outreach Committee proudly worked with Deans and UWF faculty throughout the year to continue to promote the University of West Florida Academic Honor Code. The committee distributed academic honor code magnets in every classroom on campus. The committee also hosted academic town halls to better connect students with their college Deans.

The University Outreach Committee organized the annual process of nominating and awarding Distinguished Teaching Awards and Distinguished Staff Awards on behalf of SGA.

SGA Distinguished Teaching Award Recipients:  
Dr. Susan Jans-Thomas, Ms. Rustian Phelps, Captain Henry Fair and Dr. Richard Hawkins

SGA Distinguished Staff Awards Recipients:  
Jessica Tweed, Eric Kollar, Chuck Stanhope and Patricia Hartley

Chair: Matt Danheisser  
Committee Members: Rodney Arias, Brittany Blackburn, Sherell Wood & Kate Singletary

The Student Outreach Committee worked diligently with the respective areas on campus to address student concerns. They surveyed over 1,500 students during the year to implement a new Campus Wide Survey Series called #TrendingUWF. The survey topics included Parking and Transportation, Smoking, New Student Union, Health Services, and Student Satisfaction. Student Outreach senators wrote recommendations for senate on various student concerns.

Chair: Christopher Thrasher  
Committee Members: Mark Sharp, Mariel Crawford, Brian McConville & Jordan Self

The Budget and Allocations committee allocated $3.7 million in A&S fees to various departments and organizations. This included allocations of over $30,000 to UWF students to travel to various competitions, conferences and other academic and professional activities around the globe. In addition, $28,000 was allocated to student organizations through the organization grant process.
**Freshmen Committee**

Chair: Kylan Osley  
Committee Members: Christine Bailey, Jonathan Brannan, Marlene Burrell, Jerome Green, Vincenzo LaMonica, Adrian Lawrence, Shannon Lipscomb, Brandon McCaffery, Brandon Robinson, Allyse Rolle-Polk, Ariana Romero, Victoria Whatley & Elizabeth Wright

The SGA Freshmen Committee is a group of 20 freshmen selected to participate in a leadership development curriculum designed to prepare students for future membership within SGA. The committee also elects co-chairs and attends weekly senate meetings.

The Freshmen Committee continued their tradition of hosting the Oxfam Hunger Banquet to promote awareness about world hunger. They also lead the Freshmen Committee Leadership Workshop for local area high school students.

**Cabinet**

Chief of Staff: Chelsea Kendrick  
Directors: Chris Hill, Brooke Mills & Tyler Martin

The Cabinet worked on a series of efforts throughout the academic year. Members participated in monthly Florida Student Association (FSA) meetings around the state. SGA President, Cora Merritt, appointed over 50 students to sit on over 20 University Standing Committees.

In addition, cabinet members implemented Argo Atlas—a campus wide events calendar for students living on campus. They also hosted the first-ever Paint Your Pride event in which over 35 student organizations participated to paint a ceiling tile to represent their organization. Tiles are now displayed in the breezeway of the commons.

SGA & Voyages partnered with various community groups to promote voter registration for the presidential elections. They successfully signed up 85 students to vote.

Cabinet members spearheaded the initiative for students to attend Rally in Tally in April 2013. 33 UWF students made the trip to Tallahassee to rally in support of their education.

**Looking Ahead...**

**Strategic Goals 2013-2014**

- Formalize all A&S processes into SGA Office including advising Budget & Allocations Committee, handling disbursement of funds to students, departments and student organizations and coordinating all travel and budget paperwork for the A&S accounts
- Increase SGA’s connection with academic colleges through strategic collaborations with deans and faculty
- Improve opportunities for non-traditional, graduate and Emerald Coast students to get involved with the work of SGA
- Align SGA’s goals and work towards the Division of Student Affairs and the University’s strategic plans
- Build on leadership development programs and opportunities for all SGA members including Executive Board, Freshmen Committee, Senators and Cabinet Members
Vision
The University of West Florida Student Government Association will lead with integrity to build trust, promote pride and ensure a united voice for all students.

Goals

Visibility
SGA commits our time and effort to promote transparency and accessibility by marketing SGA events, increasing voter turnout and gaining the trust of every student.

Pride
SGA commits to supporting and enhancing student life by promoting a sense of spirit and tradition, helping to ensure that students become true Argonautes.

Integrity
SGA commits to leading by example in order to maintain professionalism and respect within the university’s administration, faculty, staff, and student body.

Accountability
SGA commits to leading with the spirit of our constitution and statutes by maintaining awareness of the student voice and constantly assessing our organization.

Unity
SGA commits to promoting a diverse and an inclusive environment in which students are free to express themselves and feel safe doing so as one unified body.